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AUTHOR Conti, Gary J.
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ABSTRACT

A 3-day conference was held to generate the goals for Adult Basic Education (ABE) in Texas for the remainder of the decade, to examine barriers to and bridges for accomplishing these goals, and to propose strategies for implementing these goals. During the conference, 19 participants (including directors, supervisors, teachers, university faculty members, a counselor, and state agency staff) prioritized their desired goals for Texas ABE in the 1980s. These goals included the following: clarifying and promoting the role, scope, and function of ABE; developing and expanding cooperative linkages; initiating additional legislative action for promoting and supporting ABE; establishing permanent funding sources for adult education; and establishing guidelines for the efficient and equitable allocation and distribution of funds. Following an analysis of the barriers to and bridges for accomplishing these goals, conference participants formulated strategies for implementing the goals. Included among these strategies were the following: developing an image statement for ABE, actively involving educators in the lobbying process, placing legislative requests on a personal basis, developing diverse strategies for linking with various groups and considering the ramifications of each linkage on the entire adult education system, and developing goals that are mutually acceptable to target group learners and adult educators. (MN)

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CONFERENCE REPORT

Texas ABE in the 1980's:

Goals and Strategies for the Future

January 6-8, 1982

By
Gary J. Conti
Assistant Professor

Adult and Extension Education
Texas A&M University
College Station, Texas 77843

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INTRODUCTION

Early in the 1970's Alvin Toffer popularized the importance of recognizing the impact of change. As a result, many have accepted the necessity of constantly generating alternative scenarios of the future. Although it is a common historical phenomenon for each generation to accept the convention that the current period is in the most serious crisis of all time, recent changes in the social, political, and economic patterns in the U.S. necessitate that adult educators realisticly assess their current situation to anticipate inevitable change. A comprehensive assessment should involve the identification of existing elements that are likely to continue, elements creating change, and strategies for coping with the future.

Recent growth in adult basic education (ABE) programs can be traced from the passage of the Federal Adult Education Act in 1966. It stimulated the creation and expansion of similar state supported programs and witnessed the opening of ABE programs throughout the country. In addition to fulfilling the mission prescribed in the federal and various state enactments, these local centers became vehicles for assisting manpower training and welfare agencies in achieving their goals.

Because of this close relationship between ABE program viability and federal funding, the "New Federalism" proposed by the Reagan Administration has important implications for adult basic educators. The size of existing and proposed cuts in federal funding and the massive reduction and elimination of allied programs alters the method of program operation and in fact threatens their very survival. These changes mandate a fresh

analysis of the status of ABE. In order to generate goals and strategies for addressing the new realities of the 1980's in the state, Texas A&M University convened a three day conference of a representative sample of experienced ABE practitioners.

CONFERENCE FORMAT

The Texas ABE in the 1980's Conference was held at Texas A&M University on January 6-8, 1982. The purpose of the conference was to bring together a group of practitioners to think about the issues facing ABE and to generate innovate approaches for addressing these issues. Representatives from various sectors of the field were invited. The nineteen participants included directors, supervisors, teachers, university faculty members, a counselor, and state agency staff (see Appendix A). The three objectives for the conference were to generate the goals for ABE in Texas for the remainder of the decade, to examine barriers to and bridges for accomplishing these goals, and to propose strategies for implementing these goals.

Because of the nature of the conference goals and because of the philosophical bent of the conference planners, emphasis was placed on a format to implement the fundamental adult education maxim of "whenever possible select a method which involves the greatest degree of participation." The nominal group technique was utilized as the principal method for organizing group activities because of its potential for allowing input from each participant, for generating open discussion of divergent ideas, and for achieving a consensus. The nominal group technique involves the generation of ideas, a round-robin listing of ideas,

the open discussion of listed ideas, and finally a consensus ranking of ideas. Some of the sessions started with the silent generation of ideas by each participant while others utilized the priority ideas generated by earlier sessions.

The conference activities were divided into three major segments. Each addressed one of the conference goals and was also divided into two parts. Each segment began with an activity to stimulate global thinking about the upcoming task. These were followed by small group activities with a focused discussion which related these ideas to ABE.

The first conference segment dealt with generating the goals for ABE for the 1980's. To introduce this topic, Dr. John R. Hoyle, Professor of Education Administration at Texas A&M University, delivered a keynote address entitled "Educational Priorities for the Future." In setting the tone for the conference, Hoyle stressed the need to consider alternative futures. These alternatives must deal with ideas and incorporate the ideas of the future. Although these alternatives are futuristic projections, they demand immediate action. According to Hoyle, now is the time to act in order to have an impact upon the future. Finally, Hoyle emphasized that quality, motivation, and hope in today's world rests upon future focused role images of success. Therefore, adult basic education's scenarios for the future must attempt to capture the future success images of each client group with which it works and to anticipate the steps needed to activate these images.

Following Hoyle's presentation which addressed the entire field of education, the participants divided into small groups to begin generating specific goals for ABE in the 1980's. For this initial activity, groups

were formed according to the participant's roles in ABE. The three groups were the program administrators consisting of directors and supervisors, a teacher group including both local program and university teachers, and the state agency staff. Each group utilized the nominal group technique. Ideas were silently generated, listed, discussed, and ranked.

Thus, the opening afternoon session immediately involved the participants in generating the content of the conference. They were exposed to a stimulating futuristic presentation and began an idea exchange with cohorts who have a similar role in ABE. In order to encouraged further interaction, the conferees and Texas A&M University staff were treated to a hospitality at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Robert Fellenz. Discussion and cordiality continued to develop at a banquet dinner immediately following the hospitality.

The morning session of the second day of the conference continued to focus on the generation of goals and utilized the goals which had been developed by each group. In order to share the previous day's outcomes, a panel, which consisted of a representative from each group, presented the individual group ranking of goals. After the panel presentation, the groups were reorganized so that each contained members from the local administrator, teacher, and state agency staff groups. Once again the nominal group technique was utilized. However, instead of silently generating new ideas, each group started with the total list of goals previously generated. Following a thorough discussion, categorization, and modification of these, each group reached consensus on up to 10 goals.

After each group had its list of priorities for the decade, barriers to and bridges for accomplishing these specific goals were examined. To

stimulate thinking in this area, a panel discussion was held. The panel members represented entities with past and potentially future linkages with ABE. The panel members were Ms. Kristen Standage of Texas Instrument representing business and industry, Mr. Wayne Sadberry of the Brazos Valley Development Council representing manpower development, and Dr. Chester Stout of College of the Mainland representing community colleges. Each panel member addressed the twin questions of what can ABE do for us and what can we do for ABE. Following the panel discussion, each group brainstormed and discussed factors for either helping or hindering their goal achievement.

The final day of the conference dealt with developing strategies for implementing the goals for the 1980's and with sharing and examining the feasibility of these goals. The strategy session was introduced by Dr. Robert Fellenz. After a series of exercises in strategy formation, each group developed strategies for implementing its goals.

The final conference activity consisted of a reaction panel to provide a reality check on the goals and strategies developed by each group. The panel members represented the private sector, education, and the political arena. The members were Mr. Steve Arden, President of the Bryan/College Station Chamber of Commerce; Dr. Dean Corrigan, Dean of the College of Education at Texas A&M University; and Glen Maxey, Legislative Assistant and candidate for the state legislature. The panel listened to the goals and strategies of each group and from their perspective commented on the practicality of each. This activity also provided a forum for the sharing among all participants of the ideas developed in each group.

OUTCOMES

The first interaction activity of the conference grouped the participants according to their roles in the ABE program. Three groups were formed and led by Texas A&M University Interdisciplinary Education members. After a brief explanation of the nominal group technique, fifteen minutes were alloted for each participate to silently generate a personal list of goals for ABE in the remaining years of the decade. Following a round-robin listing, these ideas were thoroughly discussed. Although a wide variety of items were discussed during this three hour session, each group narrowed its list to ten. This consensus list was compiled by pooling the individual rankings. The priority rankings of each of the groups are as follows:

Directors/Supervisors

1. To promote the identification of a single funding source for ABE academic skills programs in order to increase efficiency and eliminate duplication.

2. To have a greater amount of lead time on issues related to ABE funding.

3. To continue the ABE co-op concept.

4. To clarify the role and authority of adult educators by involving local practitioners in the decision making process. Basic questions such as "Who are we?" and "What is our business?" should be answered.

5. To distribute funds in an equitable fashion so that the percentage of the state's total ABE funds that are allocated to a local program is similar to the percentage of the state's total number of students served.

6. To develop a system of certification and/or endorsement for all ABE personnel.

7. To emphasize literacy training.

8. To integrate more life coping skills into the ABE/GED curriculum.

9. To increase methods for delivering services to all handicapped groups.

10. To increase the accountability of ABE programs.

Teachers/Higher Education

1. ABE promoted beyond marginal stature at local/regional/state levels.

2. ABE move to "full time" commitment and/or professional mentality.

3. ABE instruction must involve "consciousness raising" for local empowerment.

4. ABE established priorities for staff, materials, structure, and organization to share and avoid waste and duplication.

5. ABE system insures quality instruction and management (professionalism).

6. ABE expand linkage, planning, curriculum, and/or skills for survival.

7. ABE become cooperating partners with other systems (secondary, K-8, V. A., library, church, community education).

8. ABE have improved recruitment and retention of disadvantaged adults.

9. ABE structure itself for flexibility and development.

10. ABE homestudy function under new state guidelines.

State Agency Staff

1. Legislative issues: funding (fees, appropriations, contributions, etc.) mandatory for LEA's offer K-12 adult education, if desired.

2. Perceptions of role and scope of adult education by:
   a. adult educators and
   b. others (i.e., literacy, social, and/or

career skills, etc.).

3. Document and communicate products of adult education.

4. Utilizing technology in staff development and adult learning.

5. Discover how/why people really learn.

6. Cooperation of adult education and business/industry.

7. Responsibility of adult education to special populations (elderly, older youth; alternatives to out-state-school youth and adults).

8. Technological literacy by educators.

9. Should education resources be allocated to adults and K-12 based upon competency standards?

10. Can adult education be conceived as alternative education?

The second day of the conference opened with a panel presentation of the priority rankings of each group. One member from each group served on the panel and explained the goals of his/her group to the rest of the conference participants. To assist in this clarification process, copies of each group's goals were given to each participant. One hour was alloted for this activity.

Following the panel discussion of the group concerns, three new groups (see Appendix B) were formed which contained members from each of the role function groups represented at the conference. Each group was led by a Texas A&M University faculty member, and a modified nominal group technique was used. Instead of starting with the silent generation of goals, the groups used the 30 goals generated in the previous groupings as a starting point for their discussions. After two hours of discussion, grouping, and modification of the items, each group prioritized its list of desired goals for Texas ABE in the 1980's.

The priority rankings for the goals of the decade for each of these representative groups are as follows:

Group A

1. Develop an effective and consistent funding source to eliminate duplication and to allow for equitable distribution of funds through the co-op system and for adequate lead time for local decision making.

2. Develop a flexible delivery system which adult education can be held accountable for and which responds to change and to the delivery of programs to special groups and for alternative education.

3. Develop a system for local input into the establishment of program operation guidelines during the development stage.

4. Provide a high school or equivalency education to all perons regardless of age.

5. Provide staff development in the areas of basic literacy, technology, human interaction, and adult learning theory.

6. Increase the professionalization of the field through the establishment of a flexible system of certification and the development of adult education as a primary employment commitment.

7. Provide a diversified curriculum to meet the needs of all community groups including special populations.

8. Establish linkages to meet the interdependent needs of the public and private sectors.

Group B

1. Role and scope - to have a system developed which would describe and clarify the nature of the adult education program state-wide and which would communicate this identity to various constituencies (e.g., staff, public, and legislature).

2. Legislative enactments - to have a unified funding system developed which is consistent with the existing state legislative mandate and which would provide that:
   a. a fair share of the available education monies be allocated to the adult basic education enterprise, and
   b. all state and federal education monies be distributed

through TEA to eliminate duplication in the delivery of services.

3. Delivery system - to have a stable and unitary co-op plan in place state-wide as the primary organ for the distribution of adult basic education funds which are allocated from TEA to the co-ops.

4. Management - to refine the system for state and local management of adult education resources which facilitates a coordinated and efficient approach to the identification of the full range of adult needs and effective utilization of staff, fiscal, and physical resources in meeting these needs.

5. Linkage - to have a strong linkage program between adult education and community agencies.

6. Student recruitment - to have a system in place which identifies and services special populations.

7. Staffing and retention - to develop a system of acquisition and retention of professional adult-oriented staff in the positions of administrators, supervisors, counselors, teachers, aides, and support staff.

8. Curriculum and instruction goals - to develop a curriculum which fosters total-person development, life coping skills, consciousness raising, sense of community, self-concept, career planning, cultural diversity, basic skills, and local empowerment.

9. Training - to develop a comprehensive system for insuring the professional development of all staff and volunteers within the ABE program.

10. Accountability and evaluation - to develop an accountability which documents program operational outcomes and provides for periodic comprehensive program evaluation.

Group C

1. Clarify and promote the role, scope, and function of adult education.

2. Develop and expand adult education cooperative linkages with agencies, organizations, business, industry, and other entities.

3. Initiate additional legislative action for promoting and supporting adult education.

4. Establish permanent funding source(s) for adult education and

establish guidelines for the efficient and equitable allocation and distribution of funds.

5. Promote professional growth and commitment of adult educators (e.g., salary, schedules, and endorsement or certification).

6. Systematize program accountability in adult education and disseminate results (e.g., student data form).

7. Promote state-wide adoption of competency based standards of instruction for adult education.

8. Increase support and services to special populations in adult education (e.g., handicapped, illiterate, institutionalized, elderly, etc.).

9. Promote the continuation of the co-op concept as a delivery system for adult education.

Following the final prioritizing of the individual group goals, attention was turned to factors that would either assist or hinder the accomplishment of these goals. To stimulate thinking in this area, a panel with representatives from the local human development council, business and industry, and a community college addressed the topic of linkages for the future. As a result of the presentations by the panel members and the resultant discussions, it was concluded that:

1. The ability to communicate well will continue to be a primary competency needed by ABE graduates for success.

2. Education needs to provide each student with a set of "tools" that s/he can build upon.

3. Adult education needs to be a concentrated effort which coordinates both academic and vocational training.

4. A large segment of those needing ABE will require supportive services such as child care and transportation in order to participate in the educational program.

5. Traditional linkage agencies such as CETA will probably not exist in the near future.

6. Many industries are increasing their on-site training.

7. Larger industrial sites are using outside educational sources whenever possible.

8. Future cooperation between industry and ABE programs will depend on the profit factor with industry selecting the delivery system which is the cheapest.

9. Adult education programs need to make various community and entrepreneurial groups aware of their service.

10. Education is a community resource that is considered in business decisions.

11. Because of the community college commitment, linkages between ABE and the community college can be expected to continue to grow.

12. Comprehensive community colleges offer a variey of supportive services that may increase an ABE students chance for success in a post-secondary setting.

13. Possibilities exist for common linkages among ABE, community colleges, and industries which would give preference for employment to student who had completed the ABE program and some training at the community college in exchange for the school's guarantee that the potential employee has certain level math and reading skills.

14. A need exists for both day and evening full-time adult programs.

After the panel discussion, the groups reconvened and analyzed barriers to and bridges for the attaining of their goals. Each group recorded the factors generated during this two hour session and used this

list as a guide in the strategy session.

The third day of the conference began with a session to formulate strategies for implementing the goals generated by each group. Dr. Robert Fellenz conducted the initial activity in this session. By means of a series of exercises in decision making, he encouraged the participants to think about the process of strategy formation and its relationship to goal implementation. Following this activity, the groups meet for the last time. For two and one-half hours they discussed strategies which could be useful in implementing each of their goals and which considered the prevously identified barriers and bridges to the future. These strategy discussions focused on legislative action, increased professionalization, linkages, public relations, and program review (see Appendix C).

The final conference session provided a forum for the sharing of the group goals and strategies and for feed-back on these ideas from a group outside of adult education. In order to provide a reality check upon the ideas generated by the conference, the final summaries of group goals and strategies were presented by representatives from each group to a reaction panel. The panel members represented the field of education, the private sector, and the legislative arena. Reactions in these diverse areas were sought because adult education is a subset of the overall field of education, because current trends indicate increased linkages for ABE with the private sector, and because fiscal issues will be decided in the legislative arena.

The panel aptly reminded the participants that:

1. Adult education urgently needs an image statement that would clarify to legislators and other groups what adult education does and how

they have a tie with adult education.

2. Involvement in the lobbying process is crucial to success in the political arena. Educators need to be in constant contact with legislators, and the contacts must be initiated long before the beginning of the legislative session. Legislators need to be informed of how adult education funds will be used and how this expenditure will affect people.

3. Legislative requests need to be put on a personal basis by informing legislators of ways the program can affect them and of the excellent job that adult education is currently doing.

4. The adult education community needs to prioritize its list of actions for the legislative arena.

5. Adult educators should put their ideas in the hands of a legislator who is credible.

6. Many groups may be better organized than adult education and may be trying to absorb adult education in order to strengthen their support base.

7. Regardless of other cuts in education, the public will probably demand priority funding for K-12.

8. Most of the demand in the 1980's may be for short term training.

9. Adult educators may need to develop diverse strategies for linking with various groups and will need to consider the ramifications that each linkage will have on the entire adult education system.

10. Adult educators need to identify the large number of adult learners in diverse setting and negotiate with them to arrive at goals and values which are mutually acceptable to both the target group and the adult educators.

11. Many in the business/industrial community feel that adult education's role is to merely teach the basic skills and to avoid involvement in personal development and social issues.

12. Adult educators must identify the knowledges and qualities which a person must possess in order to competently operate in the field.

13. Many argue that an inalienable right to an education exists in the United States and that ABE affords a large portion of the population to this right.

Evaluation

As a final activity, participants were asked to evaluate the conference. The evaluation form contained two parts (see Appendix D). In the first section, the participants were asked to respond to various parts of the conference on a five point likert-type scale. The second portion contained open-ended questions soliciting participant opinions on the strengths and weaknesses of the conference.

The participants responses on the evaluation were overwhelmingly positive. The opportunity for both formal and informal interaction was considered the major strength of the conference. They also felt that the following contributed positively to a successful conference:

1. The opportunity to express personal ideas.
2. Representation from all aspects of the ABE program.
3. The opportunity for sharing and for open ended discussion.
4. The cooperative attitude of the group members.
5. The structure of the workshop which was well organized, had purposeful direction, and stayed on time.

6. The conference leadership.

7. The tone set by the keynote speaker.

8. The use of the nominal group technique.

9. The fact that such a conference was being attempted.

The comments concerning weaknesses focused on the short lead time in informing participants of the conference and on the confusion concerning the ending time for the final session. Several voiced a preference for having a copy of a conference agenda before the conference although they realized that agendas were not available because of the short lead time in planning the conference and because of the proximity of the conference to the year end holidays. The confusion on the ending time for the conference resulted from the information in the invitation letter. At the time of its mailing, the conference was planned to end at noon. The extension of the conference to 3:00 p.m. was not systematically communicated to all participants before their arrival at the conference.

Other weaknesses identified were related to a concern that:

1. The task was too great for the time.

2. The conclusions derived by the conference were not extremely creative of future focused.

3. The reaction panel could have been composed of Texas A&M University faculty.

Finally, several participants expressed a concern related to the use of the goals and strategies generated by the conference. Throughout the conference, the participants expressed a strong desire to have the conference outcomes implemented. A strong desire also was expressed for a follow-up conference within six month or a year to assess the degree of

progress in achieving these goals.

CONCLUSIONS

Conference Process

As a result of the conference activities, two types of conclusions can be drawn. The first relates to the process. The conference organization and operation were based upon fundamental adult education principles. Assuming a trust in people and a belief that people are capable of generating the solution to their own problems, the conference emphasized a group process which encouraged maximum participation and reliance on participant experiences. The focus of the conference was on problem solving. Although the conference planners provided a structure and a series of events to stimulate global thinking in various areas, the conference content was completely dependent upon the participants. The interaction, the quality of the discussion, the cooperation, and the outcomes indicate that the philosophical assumptions and methods were appropriate and effective.

Goals for the 1980's

The second type of conclusions relates to the content of the conference. Although a variety of ideas were proposed by separate groups, the overall goals and strategies emanating from each demonstrated considerable commonality among the groups. The goals which were suggested by the groups that were formed according to the three roles in the adult basic education program can be divided into the categories of funding, the image of ABE, the purposes of ABE, and the organization and development of the field. A desire for a balanced and direct funding source utilizing the

existing co-op system was universally voiced. The lack of a clear image of ABE was also a deep concern. To remove this lack of identity and marginality, discussions focused on the need to clarify the role of ABE, to foster the concept and feeling of a full-time commitment to the field, and to guarantee the quality and accountability of the overall program. Although a consensus was not reached among the groups on the purpose of ABE, each group's final outcome indicated that addressing the purpose of the field is an important goal for the future. Discussion on this issue need to focus on the nature of the curriculum, the appropriate outcomes of the program, and the makeup of the target population. In the area of organization and development of the field, the groups discussed the role and shape of future linkages for flexibility and survival, the nature of staff development, and the appropriate direction of research in ABE. Thus, while the exact wording of initial goals generated at the conference tended to reflect the role of the participants in their individual programs, the pooling of the group goals indicated considerable commonality among the participants concerning their vision of the needed goals for the decade.

When the participants were regrouped with the various roles in the ABE program distributed among the various groups, a similar commonality of goals was produced. The final goals for Texas ABE in the 1980's reflected a concern for:

1. The funding structure of ABE
2. The nature and content of the ABE delivery system
3. The management system for ABE
4. The image of ABE
5. Professional growth within the field.

It was concluded that a primary goal for ABE should be to attain a consistent and equitable funding source which would eliminate duplication with other agencies. The delivery system for the future should continue to be flexible, offer a diversified curriculum, and strive to meet the needs of and provide services to special populations. Although linkages should be pursued with various community, public, and private groups, the programs should continue to be managed through the existing co-op system. To establish stronger relationship with outside entities and to improve its professional status, adult educators need to better describe and clarify their aims, purposes, and functions. Continuing the theme of professionalism, the participants emphasized the need for continuous staff development. Recognizing the importance of their function to the overall educational mission of the country and believing in their ability to deliver quality programs in relationship to these goals, they supported increased measures of accountability.

Strategies of Action

The groups also demonstrated considerable commonality in the strategies they proposed for implementing their goals. Because the growth of ABE programs has been directly related to governmental funding and because all categorial programs for disadvantaged groups are experiencing cuts at the federal level, all groups emphasized the need for activities by adult educators in the legislative arena. These include direct contact with legislators, identifying supportive legislators, using professional lobbyists, and communicating with members of the State Board of Education. At the program level, they include getting legislators involved with the

local programs, encouraging students to communicate their feeling about the program to their legislators, and seeking public support. Most importantly, the groups voiced a realization that influence in the legislative arena is a political process that must be constantly cultivated and which requires an investment in time and effort in order to yield a profit.

The groups also identified improved communications as a means of accomplishing future goals. Increased communication with groups external to ABE can serve the purpose of facilitating the formation of coalitions, aligning the support of others for the goals of ABE, disseminating information about the services of ABE, furthering political goals, informing others of the personal and societal benefits derived from ABE, and clarifying ABE's role. Internal communication within the field can strengthen the ABE network. To accomplish the stated goals, Texas adult educators will need an efficient communications network for rapidly exchanging information, for sharing materials and expertice, and for jointly planning and participating in quality professional development activities.

Finally, the groups recognized the need for a strong state professional association. Such an organization can provide the vehicle for leadership within the ABE community. By forming a political action arm, it can provide a consistent mechanism for interacting with key legislators. By increasing its membership, it can speak as a united voice for the field and communicate the needs and concerns of the field to the state educational agency. By means of state association sponsored conferences, a forum can be created for promoting the exchange of ideas among adult

educators throughout the state and for the expansion of the field's communication network. In addition, the state association can assume the leadership responsibility for specifically defining and promoting the image of adult education. Thus, a strong state professional association can play a vital role in fostering the achievement of the future goals for ABE.

Reactions from Outside ABE

Although the participants were encouraged about the goals and strategies generated by the conference because of their view of the mission of ABE, the reaction from those outside of adult education was quite sobering. The reservations, concerns, and observations of the reaction panel were a good indicaton that the goals generated by this conference will require a tremendous amount of energy and organization in order to be activated. Adult educators will need to be unified and to provide a singularly clear message in order to be heard. The reactors bluntly observed that other groups competing for the funds previously appropriated for ABE and for the adult client are bigger and better organized than ABE. Some, such as K-12 programs, are better able to win the sympathy and support of the general public. ABE's changes for success in this competitive situation and its likelihood of gainng allies are hindered by the lack of a clear image of its role in society. Worst yet, some strongly disagree with ABE programs providing diversified programs which include personal development.

The reaction panel also reminded the participants that they need to think in terms of alternative scenerios for the future. Although many adult educators are ready to rush pell-mell into cooperative arrangements

with a wide array of community, public, and/or private groups, the reactors cautioned adult educators to consider the compatibility of the ABE program's goals with those of the linkage agency. While linkages offer the benefits of additional funds, facilities, and students, they carry the danger of significantly modified or completely altered goals. Therefore, future linkages and other future plans need to consider guarantees to protect the original mission of ABE.

The participants were also clearly reminded that adult educators are part-time novices in the full-time intricacies of politics. In order to become effective in the legislative arena, they need to thoroughly learn the political process and allocate some of their resources for purchasing the services of a professional lobbyist. Without such a lobbyist, the ABE community's influence in the legislative arena will remain weak, dissipated, and unproductive.

Immediate Challenges

This conference clearly indicates that the practitioners fulfilling the various roles in the ABE programs throughout the state are capable of identifying the immediate and long range concerns of the field and that they are capable of devising realistic strategies for dealing with these concerns. Their actions present challenges to a number of groups within the ABE community. The biggest challenge has been issued to the state professional association. Legislative action, communication, and practitioner leadership depend on direction from a strong, independent, and viable state association. A significant challenge has also been presented to the state educational agency. Clear concerns and goals have been voiced

from a representative group in the field, and a call for greater practitioner input into ABE policymaking has been expressed. Because of its role in organizing and conducting the conference, Texas A&M University has been challenged to conduct yearly follow-up conferences to monitor the progress of conference outcomes and to involve a greater number of practitioners in updating ABE goals and strategies. Finally, ABE practitioners in general are presented with the challenge of upgrading their professionalism and full-time commitment to ABE, of becoming more active in the legislative process, and of joining and supporting their state professional association.

T.G.I.M.

In his keynote address, Hoyle pointed out that there is an alternative to the T.G.I.F. (Thank Goodness It's Friday) syndrome. The positive option, T.G.I.M. (Thank Goodness It's Monday!), assumes that one has a chance to complete the unfinished tasks of the past and to charge forth to discover and conquer new challenges. The success of ABE in Texas during the 1980's will be directly related to the proportion of adult educators practicing T.G.I.M.

Appendix A:

List of Participants

Directors:

Clarice Clairborne	Odessa College, Odessa
Jim Morgan	Region IX Service Cn., Wichita Falls
Dwight Overholser	Houston Community College, Houston
Bill Spillar	College of the Mainland, Texas City
Beto Tijerina	Corpus Christi ISD, Corpus Christi

Supervisors:

Shirley Crockett	Heart of Texas Co-op, Waco
William Edwards	Rusk State Hospital, Rusk
Bob McMakin	Rusk ISD, Rusk
Nat Williams	Dallas ISD, Dallas

Teachers:

Kathy Rector	Heart of Texas Co-op, Temple
Julia Roberts	Region IV Service Center, Houston
Cheryl Rodgers	Abilene ISD, Abilene
Barb Tiekin	Comal ISD, New Braunfels

State Agency Staff:

Bob Allen	Texas Education Agency, Austin
Roman Lopez	Texas Education Agency, Corpus Christi
Ralph Mock	Texas Education Agency, Austin

Higher Education:

Bonnie Longion	Southwest Texas St. Univ., San Marcos
Mark Walsh	Texas A&I Univ., Kingsville

Counselor:

Chester Stout	College of the Mainland, Texas City

Appendix B:

Discussion Groups for Goals and Strategies

Group A

Gary Conti*
Jim Morgan
Bill Spillar
Chester Stout
Kathy Rector
Nat Williams
Ralph Mock

Group B

Paulette Beatty*
Clarice Clairborne
Barb Tieken
Julia Roberts
Shirley Crockett
Bonnie Longion
Bob Allen

Group C

Gonzalo Garcia*
Beto Tijerina
Dwight Overholser
Cheryl Rodgers
Bob McMakin
W. N. Edwards
Mark Walsh
Ramon Lopez

*Group leader from Texas A&M University's adult education faculty.

Appendix C:

Group Strategies to Implementing Goals

Group A

Goal — Strategies

1. Learn to be good competitors for funds with other agencies that have adult training funds.
   Learn to cooperate more effectively with other agencies
   Take the lead in pulling various groups together
   Seek change in legislation to flow all training funds through established adult education channels by active network
   Dialogue among various state agency leaders
   Consider seeking professional lobbyist through state association
   Local practitioners working with their legislators
   Identify legislators supportive of adult education (and support them)
   Identify legislators who do not support adult education and inform them and/or organize opposition
   Human benefits side of adult education
   Graduation activity - invite politician (also Christmas parties, etc.)
   During election year - get all candidates together for forum at your center then have students and graduates turn out in mass
   Empty chair technique for non-shows
   During non-election years - invite legislator for exchange forum with students
   Create political action arm within state association
   Recruitment effort for state association
   Communicate impact of strong state association on legislators attack apathy
   Have legislative sessions at state association meeting and legislative conferences.

2. Educating educators of benefits of a diversified program - staff development activities, A. various delivery systems such as home study; B. individual needs; C. types of disadvantaged - ways to deal with each
   Compare to other programs - both adult education and non-adult education
   Inform other groups of our services and adjust local program to meet their needs
   Petition for waiver to TEA for special flexibility in setting up new programs.
   Articulate ABE services with existing agencies for the mutual benefit and exhange of students and to set up a plan for having funds flow to the agency providing the service.

3. TEA should be encouraged to establish administrative procedures to obtain input from practitioners during initial formulation of program guidelines through formal request by state association.

4. Same legislative as #1.

5. Include these activities in state and local staff development workshops.

Identify people with above skills who can teach
Purchase and/or locate use of the technological tools.
Communicate with TEA need for various technological products.
Have state association set up committee to evaluate new technological equipment.
310 research project of various technological equipment.
Regional staff development team made up of local, state, and university personnel.
Compile state-wide directory of available expertice and resources in the state.
Establish exchange service for materials through system such as TRENDS or newsletter.

6. Encourage state association to report progress and the views of practitioners to TEA by fall Statewide A.E. Conference of 1983.
   Local programs need to re-examine options for flexible scheduling to employ full time personnel.

7. Establish local advisory groups to elicit special needs.
   Establish curriculum to set up diversified programs.
   Conduct staff development activities of ways to diversify curriculum

8. Develop diversified programs
   Take initiative in contacting other agencies and organizations and inform them of the short and long-term benefits of ABE services.
   Be available for working with other agencies.

Group B

Goals — Strategies

1. 1. establish a representative group of adult educators in Texas to function as ad hoc planning committee to
   a. design role and scope statement/document
   b. obtain regional/representative feedback
   2. receive TACAE and other professional associations endorsement
   3. receive local endorsement
   4. receive legislative endorsement
   5. disseminate role and scope documents/products

2. 1. establish a core group
   2. procure state Board of Education recommendation
   3. identify and contact key legislators to support ABE
   4. develop a system for contacting local legislators with documentation in hand
   5. receive endorsement of governors
   6. mobilize all support state-wide

3. 1. establish a core group of adult educators
   2. develop criteria for a delivery system and models for implementing the system
   3. establish a support group of college presidents and ISD superintendents
   4. endorse co-op plan

4. 1. establish a core group
   2. have educators and others identify problems in need of resolution and offer suggestions
   3. have the individuals communicate directly to policy makers/state board of education and legislators

5. 1. establish a core group
   2. identify and analyze current state legislative mandate which specifies coordination and specifies that all state and federal adult education funds flow through TEA
   3. develop specifications for a linkage system allowing for flexibility
   4. receive State Board of Education endorsement of position on policy
   5. disseminate to co-op directors

6. 1. establish a core group
   2. identify special populations
   3. identify other agencies serving these populations
   4. identify alternate processes for recruitment
   5. disseminate process information for recruitment to co-op directors

7. 1. establish a core group
   2. develop minimum entry reqirement specified for all staff positions

3. develop a system which would continually increase full-time personnel
4. develop system for appropriate staff compensation such fringe benefits, sick leave, etc.

8. 1. establish a representative on-going core group
2. plan, write, review, guide ABE curriculum in accord with role and scope positions and research studies nationwide
3. disseminate curriculum and instruction suggestions and materials statewide

9. 1. establish a statewide core group
2. establish one person in each co-op to be responsible for staff development in co-op.
3. develop a wide range of staff development alternatives such as one week staff development opportunities for credit, shadowing of staff members etc.
4. establish a materials resource center and a dissemination system with a stable funding base
5. establish university ABE staff development centers with a stable funding base

10. 1. establish a core group
2. develop state minimum standards for ABE
3. develop a system for comprehensive co-op evaluation
4. disseminate the system to co-op directors

Group C

Goal — Strategies

1. Clarify role, scope, function of Adult Education.
   1. identify target population (needs)
   2. identify mandated functions
   3. identify constraints (legal, social, etc.)
   4. assess available resources
   5. assess strengths

2. Develop and expand Adult Education co-op linkages
   1. encourage Adult Education personnel to make personal contacts with business, industry and labor
   2. recruit, involve, and select B.I.L. and other representation on local Advisory Committees
   3. provide leadership in developing interagency linkages
   4. initiate Adult Education on-site classes

3. Legislative action
   1. encourage public support for Adult Education type legislation
   2. Support professional organization to act as lobbying group (TACAE)

5. Promote professional growth and commitment of Adult Educators, (i.e., salary schedules and endorsement/certification).
   1. encourage the recruitment and selection of professionally committed individuals
   2. encourage participation in professinal and staff development
   3. work toward the development of statewide teacher pay scale
   4. encourage TACAE to secure endorsement/certification

6. Program accountability
   1. utilize student data form developed by TAMU
   2. develop local dissemination network
   3. develop MIS (Management Information System) for Adult Education

7. Promote state-wide adoption of competency-based standards of instruction for Adult Education.
   1. implement CBAE concept in Adult Education programs statewide
   2. conduct staff development
   3. utilize CBAE materials for instruction
   4. documentation

10.
   1. evaluate instructional materials
   2. survey/assess student/community needs
   3. conduct staff development
   4. involve community resources (human and material) in the instruction process.

(Note: Because of time constraints, Goals 4, 8, and 9 were not addressed)

Appendix D:

Conference Evaluation

Texas ABE in the 1980's

PROGRAM EVALUATION

A. Please rate each of the following:	Great			So-So	Rotten	Rating
1. The opportunity to interact with colleagues	1	2	3	4	5	(1.13)
2. The opportunity to express your ideas	1	2	3	4	5	(1.20)
3. the conference facilities	1	2	3	4	5	(1.13)
4. the explanation of the goals of the conference	1	2	3	4	5	(1.62)
5. The keynote presentation by Dr. John Hoyle	1	2	3	4	5	(1.63)
6. The panel presentation on Linkages for the Future	1	2	3	4	5	(2.17)
7. The panel of representatives from education, the political area, and the private sector to react to group conclusions	1	2	3	4	5	(2.17)
8. The way groups were formed	1	2	3	4	5	(1.79)
9. The extra-conference activities	1	2	3	4	5	(1.20)
10. The use of the nominal group technique	1	2	3	4	5	(1.43)
11. Your overall feelings about the conference	1	2	3	4	5	(1.25)

B. Please express your opinion on the following:

1. What did you consider to be the major <u>strengths</u> of the conference?

2. What did you consider to be the major <u>weaknesses</u> of the conference?

3. Any additional comments:

Appendix E:

Conference Schedule

TEXAS ABE IN THE 1980's

Wednesday
January 6

Time	Topic	Room
1:00-1:15	Welcome to TAMU Don Seaman	404
	Purposes of the Conference Gary Conti	404
1:15-1:45	Educational Priorities for the Future Dr. John Hoyle	404
1:45-4:30	Generating Goals for the 80's	
	1. Directors	402
	2. Supervisors	402
	3. Teachers and Higher Education	404
	4. TEA staff	404
3:00-3:15	BREAK	
5:30-7:00	Hospitality Bob and Mary Fellenz 1218 North Ridgefield Cir.	
7:15-?	Dinner Julie's Place 607 Texas Avenue	

Thursday
January 7

8:30-9:00	Coffee and Donuts	404
9:00-10:00	Panel Discussion of Group Concerns	404
10:00-12:00	Settings Goals for the Decade	
	1. Group A	402
	2. Group B	402
	3. Group C	404
12:00-1:00	Lunch MSC Cafeteria	

1:00-2:30	Linkages for the Future Panel Members: Kristen Standage, Director Training and Development Wayne Sadberry, Manpower Director for the Brazos Valley Development Council Chester Stout, College of the Mainland Counselor	404
2:30-2:45	BREAK	
2:45-4:30	Barriers and Bridges for the Future	
	1. Group A	402
	2. Group B	402
	3. Group C	404

Friday
January 8

8:30-9:00	Coffee and Donuts	404
9:00-9:30	Developing Strategies	404
9:30-12:00	Strategies for Implementing Goals	
	1. Group A	402
	2. Group B	402
	3. Group C	404
12:00-1:00	Lunch MSC Cafeteria	
1:00-3:00	Wrap-Up and Reality Check Reaction Panel: Steve Arden, President Bryan/College Station Chamber of Commerce Dean Corrigan, Dean of the College of Education Glen Maxey, Legislative Assistant	404